

THE STUDENT WORLD

A quarterly magazine published at 347 Madison Avenue, New York, by the World's Student Christian Federation

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VOLUME XVIII

July, 1925

NUMBER 3

Editorial

THE present number of *The Student World*, devoted largely to notes from the records of comparatively recent visits by representatives of the World's Student Christian Federation, conveys a vivid impression of the unique and indispensable function of this world-wide union of Christian students. Although the secretarial staff of the Federation is very limited, the outreach of its helpful ministry extends to the student communities of every continent. Helpful and timely service is being rendered in newly created nations as well as among the most ancient. Student Movement activities are being developed in all classes of educational institutions from those of high-school grade up to universities.

The programme of the Federation, and increasingly of its constituent Movements, concerns itself with the whole range of the life of students. In contrast with the restricted action of earlier years in its history, the Federation and its workers are to-day deeply interested in the physical and economic well-being, the intellectual demands and struggles, and the social challenges, as well as in the moral and spiritual development of the studying youth.

A principal impression made by these detached and unrelated reports is that the leaders and members of the Christian student organizations are in the very heart of the chief problems of our time. And their interest is not merely academic, and confined to the realm of discussion. More and more they are becoming an

efficient and recognized factor in meeting such emergent and gravely critical situations as those involved in the minorities question and in other acute and inflamed international and interracial relations; in the exorcising of the war spirit; in the breaking down of religious intolerance as manifested, for example, in anti-Semitism; in the furthering of right interconfessional understanding and co-operation; and in affording a fresh and convincing apologetic for possibly the most alert and enquiring generation of students the world has ever known. The able article by Mr. Koo has an added timeliness and significance in the light of the startling and most deplorable events which have transpired in China since it was written—events involving the students of that great land and of sympathetic concern to the Christian students of all countries.

Impressions from South Africa

By HENRY-LOUIS HENRIOD

IN the course of 1922 I had the great privilege of spending five full months in South Africa. My tour had been well planned by the leaders of the Student Movement. In addition to all University centres and a number of schools and colleges I had the opportunity of visiting several missionary societies, both in the Union of South Africa and in Portuguese East Africa, and of seeing the varied beauties of the country. I attended also a few important conferences, such as the first conference to bring together native and white Christian leaders under the auspices of the Dutch Reformed Church of South Africa; I was fortunate in meeting several political and educational leaders. Some excursions and the use of all possible means of communication completed my initiation into the South African life.

I shall give here only a few extracts from the report written on my way home from South Africa and limit my remarks to the conditions of study and some impressions of the work of the Student Christian Movement.

The Field of the South African Student Movement

If primary, secondary, and higher education among white people in South Africa has not yet reached the standards and expansion obtained in Western and Northern Europe and in North America, one must remember how young the country is, how scattered the population, how difficult the means of communication often are. A century ago there were hardly any qualified teachers, and the profession was despised and shockingly underpaid, whilst now well-equipped Normal schools and colleges are preparing men and women teachers of a high order. Sport, especially Rugby Football for the boys and hockey for the girls, is very much in favour, and occupies the leading place in the life and thought of the young people in school, college, and university. South Africa possesses five Universities: Cape Town, the oldest and the second in number of students, Johannesburg (University of Witwatersrand), the youngest but already the largest, the University of Stellenbosch, stronghold of the

Dutch section of the population, and the University of South Africa, composed of six University Colleges scattered all over the country; Pretoria, Bloemfontein, Pietermaritzburg, Grahamstown, Potchefstroom, and Wellington, the last-named largely attended by women students. Altogether there are some three thousand university students in South Africa not counting a few hundred who complete their studies in Europe and in America.

The Student Christian Movement

The Student Christian Association is a well-established Movement, which has planted its roots all over the country. Its branches flourish in the schools and colleges, as well as in the universities; its total membership is over ten thousand. The Movement's characteristics are naturally influenced by the general religious, racial, and political tendencies of the country.

I was fortunate in that soon after landing I could attend the General Conference of the Movement, held only once every two years. For the first time, I believe, it took the shape of a camp. It was not limited to university students but included a large proportion of school members and a considerable number of teachers and Normal school students. Bi-lingual in character, the Conference gave a prominent part to the South African Dutch language; the main emphasis was put on devotional and apologetic addresses.

The organization of the Movement is simple: the controlling body is the general meeting of delegates; the administration is entrusted to a general committee representing the various Provinces and departments of the work; there is an Executive, whose members are chosen at or in the neighbourhood of Stellenbosch, the headquarters of the Movement. On all these committees there are but few actual students, but it is well to remember that out of ten thousand members, eight hundred only are university students. Five secretaries give their whole time to the Movement. The sum of £2,250 is needed annually to cover the budget of the Movement. Most of it is contributed by members.

Work in Schools

The practice in each Province is for each public school session to be opened with prayer and the reading of the Bible. Secular

education has not yet entered South Africa. Religious teaching and devotional meetings are welcomed by both teachers and pupils. But if the catechism is taught in the school, Bible Study is as a rule left to the care of the Student Movement, which thus benefits by a more or less official recognition. The keen interest shown generally by the headmaster and teachers, in the furthering of the aims of the Association in their school, give the latter a unique position and opportunity among schoolboys and girls.

In the planning of my tour it would have been difficult to limit myself to the universities; all over the country the school members—who have given very generously to the European Student Relief—were most eager to hear more about the Federation. Some of the biggest and most eager audiences I had were in school centres: in Bocksburg and Ermelo, for instance, the school and college authorities had organized a special meeting in the Dutch Reformed Church, with a full attendance of these institutions; in the latter there were at least eight hundred young people. In other centres I had the whole school in the main hall, or I spoke from the steps of the building to an open-air audience, when the largest class room could not contain all the pupils. There are very few schools and colleges in which the Movement secretaries are not welcomed; they generally stay for three days or a week as guests in one of the school hostels, conduct religious meetings, help and advise with regard to Bible Study methods, and have many group or personal talks with pupils and teachers. The publications of the Movement are widely used in the schools. The willingness to attend religious meetings, especially on the part of the Dutch pupils, is often limitless. It has, to be sure, its dangers: it may become purely a matter of course.

The Movement in the Universities

What I have said of the favourable conditions in the schools is true also to a large extent of university centres. The majority of the professors have a friendly attitude towards the Christian Association; they often take an active part in its activities. The Movement has branches in seven out of the eight institutions of higher learning, as well as in most of the Normal colleges in the country. Among the students, the Movement is regarded often with sympathy, sometimes with indifference, never with antago-

nism. There are no rival organizations, and the Student Movement has the advantage of being the only Student Christian Association. Men and women students work together in the Movement. They always have joint committees, often joint weekly meetings, but as a rule separate study circles. The programme of a local student Association in South Africa is very much on the same lines as in other countries. The central activity of the local Association is in their Bible Study circles. If the general meetings are often not fully attended, the Bible Circles rely on a good average of faithful members.

Social Service

Social service has not yet been greatly emphasized in the Movement. In some Associations there is lack of opportunity, whilst in others the discipline of the hostels and the distances to the slums make it difficult for the students to associate themselves with organized work on behalf of the poor. A start was made at Johannesburg during my visit. A great deal more could be done, especially in the outskirts of the towns and villages where poor whites and coloured people live under miserable moral and material conditions.

Evangelistic Work

Evangelistic campaigns among students are not one of the features of the Student Christian Association. Rationalism and atheism are not often found among the students in South Africa, but indifference, formal religion, lack of interest in anything except sports, are the main obstacles to the spreading of the ideal and purpose of the Movement. It is well to remember that all or nearly all the students are church-going people either by conviction or by tradition. But very successful evangelistic work is done through camps and sea-side services,—camps where women students, shop girls, or others enjoy a healthy and elevating life together under canvas; sea-side services organized during the Christmas vacation, at the popular bathing resorts of Cape Province and Natal. Those services have met with a growing success every year; they have in some instances entirely changed the moral atmosphere of the place, and have been very beneficial also to the young and shy students enlisted to help, who have often

found through such evangelistic work a deeper experience of God. Some trace to the sea-side services the origin of a wish to enter the ministry or to become missionaries.

Missionary Interest

The interest in Christian Missions is not general, but quite alive in the Movement, which has an encouraging number of Volunteers (75 in preparation and 115 already in the Field). The first-hand knowledge South African students can get from missionary stations, sometimes a few miles away from their home, gives them marked advantages over students from other countries. On the other hand, the fact that they live surrounded by Natives or coloured people leads many students to think that they know all about them, and about missions, when their actual knowledge is very superficial. The rapid development of the Student Christian Association in native institutions as a part of the whole Movement, the coming to the fore of the native question on political, economic, and church platforms, the influence of leading churchmen, both Dutch and English, for the missionary cause, will inevitably help forward missionary study and the work of the Student Association.

It is impossible for a temporary visitor to give an estimate of the prayer life of the Movement. But I could not help noticing that my visit, like every great concern of the Movement, was prepared for in a spirit of prayer.

Native Education

If the central and provincial governments are most generous in the education of the whites, their contribution towards native and coloured education is very poor. For the benefit of the latter £541,000 are spent yearly on a population of 5,600,000, whilst more than £7,000,000 are spent on educating 1,500,000 white people. According to official government figures, the statement of Mr. Jabavu, a distinguished native professor, is accurate when he says:

“The white people pay twenty times what the natives pay in taxes, but in education they receive fifty times what we receive. . . thus the Natives have to pay for the white man’s education.”

The salaries of native teachers are shockingly small, with a maximum of £96 a year, whilst a native policeman without education receives £104 a year, and his white colleagues are paid a minimum of £120. The Government recognizes the value of missionary education; it helps it with grants which come out of the figures just given or by supervising it through its own inspectors. Here again the Parliament has to take into account the strong prejudices of its constituencies against native education. The formula stigmatizing Christian Natives as useless and below the standard of the "raw" Native is one of those generalizations, accepted without due inquiry and thought, which have done so much in the past to obscure true facts and real issues.

Until recently no provision was made for higher education among Natives and as they are debarred from the right of studying at white universities, the only door open to them was, if they had the money required, to leave the country and to study in Europe or America. A growing number of Natives are securing their degrees in North America. Their influence, upon their return to their homeland, gives much concern to the South African authorities. On the other hand, various missionary institutions were eager to reach college standard. Enlightened Natives supported strongly a scheme in which the Government, Missionary Societies, and Natives finally united, and the result is the "South African Native College" at Fort Hare, near Lovedale. This institution enrolls already some hundred students, men and women belonging to most of the tribes of South Africa. When I asked Mr. Jabavu, whether there were many openings for the graduates of the Native South African College, his answer was most emphatic:

"There is a great scope for specialized teachers and schoolmasters. The churches require better qualified ministers. The Government is eager to appoint more agricultural demonstrators. In native territories there is room for more and better equipped civil servants in business, as interpreters and clerks. In the liberal professions there is an unlimited scope for doctors and nurses, for lawyers and barristers."

In practically all such native schools religious instruction plays an important part, and in many cases headmasters and teachers exercise an influence in harmony with the missionary aim and

spirit of the Missionary Society under which they perform their professional duties. But the position of white and of black teachers who are responsible to two authorities (the local Missionary and the Government Inspector) is becoming increasingly difficult; to some native leaders the moral standard required by the Missions is too high, and many are eager to dissociate learning from moral character and Christian faith. There is no concealing the fact that the initiative and policy as regards native education, its close relationship to or severance from Christian teaching, depends not so much on the whites as on the blacks themselves. Under such circumstances the existence of a strong and alert Student Christian Association, with student initiative, and in a large measure under student control, is of great importance.

Student Movement Activities among Natives

Twenty years ago, at the founding of the South African Student Association, a small native delegation was present at the first conference, representing the only then existing Association of Lovedale. Ten years later, when Dr. Mott and Miss Rouse visited South Africa, similar Associations were started in some ten other institutions. Now the work is carried on, in close co-operation, by two distinct organizations: the Native Student Christian Association, with branches in most of the thirty training institutions of the Union, and the Teachers' Christian Union, with several branches and many isolated members at work in remote out-stations, separated from one another by hundreds of miles and labouring often under very great difficulties, surrounded by many temptations.

The Native Student Christian Association has several flourishing branches. At Fort Hare it counts some ninety members with various sub-committees, active and effective, and sixteen Bible Circles. I had with the Bible Circle leaders of Fort Hare one of my best meetings in South Africa.

There is unlimited scope and opportunity for both organizations, but the opportunity must be seized now, and the work must be strengthened and deepened, since there is a noticeable change in the outlook of many educated Natives; bitterness is increasing on political grounds, on the question of land, and owing to injustices which they feel keenly, suffered by their race. Many think that

Christianity stands in their way in competing with the white man; and in their contact with the dominant race, they find that only a small proportion of white men live according to the Christian principles which they themselves are taught by missionaries. To some, Christian efforts are part of a wider scheme for keeping the Native down! On meeting a group of native leaders in Johannesburg, I was very much struck by their deep-rooted distrust and even hatred, their pessimism as to the good intentions of white people. Yet in the same people I found an eager response to a really Christian attitude on the part of white people.

The Student Movement among native students and teachers may become one of the important instruments in the present rapid evolution of the black race, in building up their self-respect and preparing a new sense of leadership. There is a certain lack of initiative among the Natives generally, noticeably also in the Student Movement, which has not yet found the way to express its own genius and thus enrich the Federation with a contribution of their own. The lack of indigenous support, financial and otherwise, has also hampered its progress. On the other hand, its healthy vigour, the excellent organization in several of its centres, its growing influence on teachers and future leaders, its encouraging response during the last two years to the efforts of its Secretary and friends, and most of all the life of prayer and the spirit of service which are growing up in many quarters, are guaranties of further progress in the building up of God's Kingdom.

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Conclusion

At the close of my tour, a week-end leaders' conference was called together by the Student Movement leaders. It proved very successful; it was a source of inspiration to many, and in some ways gathered up the results of the work of the last few years and showed in a clearer light where the emphasis should be laid in the future.

One of the questions emphasized was the responsibility of the Movement towards its department in native institutions. In many colleges visited I found that a considerable number of the Movement members did not know that such an organization existed. This relationship was brought home to the conference in a very

impressive way by the Secretary among native students, Mr. Yergan. It happened to be the first time that he could attend a conference of the Movement, and his coming was watched with curiosity and keen interest by all those who had never met him. Mr. Yergan spoke with so much tact and courage, and showed such a fine Christian spirit, that at the close of the conference one of the Dutch-speaking students said, deeply moved: "I go away from this conference with many deep impressions, but outstanding amongst them is the impression left on me by the personality of Mr. Yergan; it is for us to make a start, and not to let the spirit of the conference cool down." This is a new spirit.

In some respects the work among schoolboys and girls and the university work are not sufficiently separated from each other; a clearer division and specialized worker in both branches would help forward the Movement at large, and especially the universities sections, both intellectually and spiritually.

The Movement as a whole has great possibilities and if its leaders are watchful and daring, if its members become more conscious of its mission,—as an evangelistic power in the Universities and schools, as a scout in the realm of inter-racial and international relations, and as a unique factor in interconfessional questions,—the mission and influence of the South African Student Movement will take a large place in the moulding of the future of South African spiritual life.

Extracts from Reports of Visits

By SUZANNE BIDGRAIN

1. To Switzerland: November, 1924

A REAL difficulty in the work of the Student Christian Movement in Switzerland is presented by the existence of the student societies. These vary in different parts of the country, and affect only the men's side of the Movement.

The Student Societies

In French Switzerland student societies are not so numerous as in German Switzerland. Those which are most exacting in

their claims on the time of their members do not exist in French Switzerland, or only in a modified form: duelling, for example, is done away with. Even the National Society of Zofingue absorbs its members' energies more completely in the German-speaking part of the country, and there it would seem difficult to reconcile membership in it with real work for the movement. The student societies in Germany also present a difficulty much the same as that encountered in Switzerland so far as the Men's Movement is concerned.

The Raison d'Etre of the Student Christian Movement

I know it is said that in some of these societies the spiritual tone has improved, that religious questions are discussed in them; others have a definitely Christian basis, and it is asked whether the weakness of our Unions, in those cases where they have fallen off in numbers, does not simply mean a transfer of interest rather than a sheer loss of religious life. Our Unions do not exist for their own sake, and if it were true that others were carrying on our task, we might be without anxiety. But is it true? Is it not often from the point of view of general culture, of literature, or even of politics, that certain religious subjects (for example, Catholicism and Protestantism) are discussed in the great student societies? As to other societies, which have a Christian basis, are they really sources of religious development and conquest, or are they not rather meeting-grounds for young men of Christian families and sympathies (theological students and others) for the purpose of social enjoyment, rather than for a deepening of their religious life? It is extremely important to clear up these questions, and so avoid the double danger of ignoring what is actually being done and of leaving too readily to others what is our task and the justification of our existence.

It would seem that the mass of those who are indifferent or apathetic in spiritual matters is greater than was the case four or five years ago. On the other hand the doctrine of authority and a leaning towards discipline, both dogmatic and practical, has made itself powerfully felt in certain circles. It is as though, in the midst of a shapeless mass, points of crystallization should appear, hard and indestructible seeds of life, but unhappily rather

in the nature of foreign bodies than of the leaven which the lump so greatly needs. What I say here applies to many other countries as well as to Switzerland.

The Task of the Student Associations is Evangelization

I am putting here under one heading what was presented to me as two distinct problems in conversations previous to my Swiss tour. We must face realities; if we are too modest to undertake this task, then we must ask ourselves what claim we have to exist. It is quite clear that we cannot work at this task alone. But it is for us to prepare the way, to summon to our aid thinkers and believers capable of opening the attack, to arouse the sleepers, to stimulate reflection among those to whom Christianity has never been presented on its strong and satisfying side. It is for us, too, to follow up the work begun by these speakers, to make personal contacts, to provide the warm, friendly atmosphere of comradeship where this development can be carried on. This is the true difficulty, but it is also the beauty of our task: to give it up is to give up living under the pretext that lethargy is more suited to our capacities.

Some of our Associations feel that social service is also part of their task—foyers, hostels, restaurants. In this I would encourage them most heartily, and I would add that this work ought to be carried on in a spirit of absolute disinterestedness, that is, without any thought at the back of our minds of making converts, of gathering in souls where we have given out bread, and purely for the sake of the service to be done, because the Christian is one who serves according to the example of his Master. At the same time, I could no more imagine this kind of effort in one of our Associations without its central evangelistic work, than I could imagine a soul without a body. I would also add that this side of our work may be modified by circumstances in a thousand different ways, whereas our evangelistic task is always equally imperative. It is our primary task; it is *essential*, in the etymological sense of the word—part of our very being—what we are rather than what we do.

The Present Condition of the Associations

The Swiss Associations are well off as regards quarters. Each

Association has its own premises, a great advantage from the point of view of independence (there being no danger of the true "student" character being lost by meetings in private houses or in buildings of a more or less confessional character) and of regular attendance, the address being always the same. I noticed also that the Movement has gained much interest among the professors. It is much better known and understood among the university authorities in Switzerland than in many other countries. Lastly, I want to emphasize the good impression made on me by the members of the Movement.

What then is wanting?—for we all are agreed that something is wanting, and it was on this account that the Swiss Movement called on me for advice and counsel. The chief thing wanting, I think, is a true understanding of the part which the Movement is called on to play, the conviction that it is an instrument of conquest for Christ, the vision of what He can make of it. Why is not this missionary task understood and carried out as it ought to be?

I think that misunderstandings and confusion of mind exist which prevent the question from being properly approached. Too often a distinction is drawn between two points of view, which are supposed to be mutually exclusive: one entirely concentrated on depth of religious life, the other caring only for numbers. The distinction is a false one, for it is when strong convictions are found amongst the members of the Association that the missionary spirit burns brightly and an effort is made to win new men and women for Christ. Again, sometimes the spirit of conquest, the evangelistic sense, is confounded with social work, and is regarded as something antagonistic to the religious work of the Association properly so-called. I have already given my views on the subject of social work, but I would ask, What can be more truly religious than evangelistic efforts? Think of the condition of paganism in which we should still be plunged if the first Christians had been "too religious" to preach the Gospel.

After this difficulty of understanding our task, comes the difficulty of carrying it out. I must admit that I have much more sympathy with this type of difficulty, for in this sphere, even with very great zeal for the cause and a real spirit of concentration, we are all guilty of many errors.

Still, here too, many of the rocks can be avoided if they are seen, and the first thing needed is a knowledge of the ground to be covered. Our students ought to know more about the interests and leanings of those of their fellow students who do not belong to the Association. We must know them so that we may know what to give them, what side of the Gospel we are to present to them, what needs, what suffering, what trouble God can meet or soothe in them through our help.

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2. To the Netherlands: February, 1925

The impression given by a prolonged contact with the Dutch students is that they are materially-speaking better off than the other students on the Continent of Europe. Generally speaking, they certainly come from a richer social class, have better quarters, and give more time to their studies without being worried by the necessity of earning their living. The per-capita wealth of Holland is less than that of Sweden, Switzerland, or France, but property is evidently much more evenly distributed, and the whole life of the country gives an impression of affluence and comfort without unnecessary and ostentatious luxury. The students are very well housed; this is a tradition with them; they are proud of their rooms, which are arranged with taste; and they like to entertain in them, which they do very well.

The Women Students in the Universities of Holland

I found the women students pre-occupied with questions which turned our conversations into quite different channels. For a certain number of years past (this was perhaps particularly the case during the war, when the comfortably-situated families could not send their daughters to learn foreign languages abroad) it has been the fashion for girls to go to the university, and I came to the conclusion that at the present moment there are far too many women students in Holland, many of them of a rather amateurish type, girls who are studying history or chemistry not so much from any real intellectual liking for the subject, or because they wish to or are obliged to take up some profession, as because nothing more attractive has suggested itself to them. This is a very unfortunate state of things for those who have a

real love of study and throw themselves into it whole-heartedly, for it lowers the whole level of women's work and causes the public, the students, and the professors to question the advantage of higher education for women. I had the opportunity in Holland of meeting a very large proportion of the women students, at the meetings arranged for me at the club of their Union in each university, where these questions were specially discussed. Some of these clubs include in their membership all the women on the books of the university. In each of them I was most warmly welcomed. Many of the women members of our Movement belong to these clubs and the Association is known to all. In Holland students certainly could not fail to belong to the Association because they had never heard of it.

Dutch Student Religious Societies

The number of Dutch students who are members of religious associations is estimated at about thirty-five per cent. Apart from our Movement with its 900 members these societies are: the Liberal Association, with 720 members, the Calvinist Association, with 700 members, and the Catholic Association, with 900 members. The Calvinist Association and the Catholic Association are "Students' Societies" in the sense given to the words in Germany and Switzerland, rather than religious associations; that is, they consist of students with a religious background who come together at the university for the sake of social life with people of the same religious, theological, social, and political point of view; the *amicitia* element, as it is called in Holland, plays the chief part in them. The faculty of Calvinist theology at Kampen, the Calvinist university of Amsterdam (called the free university in contradistinction to the municipal university) send big contingents, in fact all their students, to the Calvinist Association. The enrollment of members is here in a sense automatic, contrary to what is the case in our Movement and the Liberal Association. But it is always difficult to resist the strong currents of life in a country, and we are influenced even by what we fight against. Matters theological and ecclesiastical are so divided up in Holland into water-tight compartments, with such thick walls between them, that our Movement, which has as its principle and ideal the winning of members by personal choice and the dictates of

the individual conscience, always runs the risk of being regarded as a student society representing one or another movement of the National Church, and from this it does not altogether escape. It is especially necessary to guard against this misconception during the periods when spiritual fervour is less intense. In truth it is only at the moments when the Spirit moves us strongly that the poor little screens that we set up in our fear between ourselves and others fail to cut us off completely; when men allow God to speak, their quarrels die down.

The Absolute Value of Christianity

In my meetings with the students of all tendencies of thought who came to public lectures, and with those of the professors whom I met, the question most discussed was that of the absolute value of Christianity, and I took this as the principal subject for the article which our Movement asked me to write for its review, *Eltheto*. In this connection, I noticed three points of view. The first is that of theosophy:

"All religions are at bottom of equal value, for in reality they are only different manifestations of one sole idea; different forms under which this idea is expressed. Therefore, we cannot speak of a scale of values amongst religions, or place Christ, Buddha, Vishnu on different planes."

This may be reconcileable with some form of idealism, Buddhism, pantheism, theosophy, but to my mind it is not Christianity, not even in cases where, as a result of intellectual vagueness or custom, or perhaps out of regard for public opinion in a so-called Christian civilization, the adjective, Christian, is still used. Of course I did not find this point of view among our members, but it is not without importance for us, and it cannot fail to influence us. There may not be a single theosophist amongst the students in close relationship with us, but it is none the less true that a wave of thought coming from India and strongly charged with pantheism is now passing over Europe, and that we have no right to ignore its effects.

A second position, much more difficult to sum up because it is a contradiction in itself, is expressed in the term, "relative absolutism." I admit the want of coherence, but decline all responsibility for it! Those who take this point of view go on

to say, "We believe in the supreme and unique value of Christ for us." This is in truth a quite relative absolutism, limited by time and space, by the bounds of a particular civilization and mode of thought. Regarded thus, Christianity is only one aspect of a certain civilization, and exists only as one form in which that civilization expresses itself. It is valid only within the limits of this civilization, which is our own; and naturally, therefore, in other conditions of life and for other races, Christianity must be replaced by other religions. What then is left of the unique and supreme character of Christ? Further, do the words, "unique," "supreme," retain their true meaning in the midst of such scepticism as to the very idea of reality, and does not such an attitude imply even the denial of that idea itself? Does it not amount to this?—"For me Christian morality is more understandable, the Christian religion more liveable than any other; it may be helpful for me to be a Christian, to act as if Christ were really Master and Saviour. But it is clear that for others, for the inhabitants of India, for example, the reverse may be the truth." What I have just written may sound exaggerated, even absurd, and I admit that the point of view is not often expressed so crudely as this; but at bottom that is what it amounts to. I must confess that I find this attitude inexplicable. I thoroughly understand and respect those who "seek in anguish of soul"; those who seek in the way of obedience, and, without believing, before believing, and in order that they may believe, seriously and conscientiously act on the words of Jesus, "If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself." They believe so strongly in a possible reality that they are willing to submit themselves to a moral discipline in order to test it. They are at the opposite extreme from scepticism. For myself, if I no longer believed in the unique and supreme significance of Christ for the salvation of men, I could no longer see in Him my Master and my Saviour. I should either be moved to seek whether God had not revealed Himself perfectly in some other person, or I should find it impossible to have faith in God at all. How can one believe in a God who has only given his children contradictory revelations, mere semblances of reality?

Doubt as to the absolute value of Christ is the more surprising

when it is found in company with belief in the absolute value of the Bible. Here again, I have expressed the contradiction in its most extreme form, so that it may be the better grasped; nobody formulates his confession of faith in this way. Still, the doubt is there, at any rate sub-consciously, when we have so much difficulty in admitting that a Chinese or a Japanese, belonging to a civilization quite different from ours, and with an utterly different intellectual horizon, can attain to faith in the same Christ, live by His spirit, and so have true communion with us. How can we wonder after this if missionary zeal is weak?

Another strange idea, which would need a good deal of justification, is this Western pretension to a monopoly of Christ. Either the Gospel has a universal value, either it is valid for the whole world, or, even if it is not, and if the question of race and culture is to play so determining a part, what right have we, the people of the West, to consider ourselves as privileged in the matter? Orientals sometimes assert that Christ was an Oriental, and that they are much better qualified to understand Him than we are. If this claim is, as I think, radically unsound, it is because Christ came for all of us, but our pretensions to a monopoly of Christianity are no less false, and show, as it seems to me, how far we are from a true understanding of the Gospel.

The Dutch Movement has no special and exclusive interest in these questions, and in raising them I have in mind the whole Federation. It is not a superfluous matter for us to know where we stand in this respect; it is a matter of life and death. We must face openly the claim of Buddhism, pantheism, and theosophy to submerge the divine figure of Christ, and to obscure in a cloud of vague religiosity the sacred realities of the conscience. On the other hand, we must realize the extreme danger of setting narrow geographical limits to our Christianity, and of a lack of spiritual fervour. Thank God for it, the person of Christ cannot be effaced beneath the garments of a given civilization, or contained within the formulas of a particular theology. The wind bloweth where it listeth. Everywhere and only where a human being follows Christ without reserve, Christianity appears in all its splendour.

The Anti-Christian Movement in China

By T. Z. Koo

The Underlying Causes of the Movement

To understand the origin and the purpose of the Anti-Christian Movement in China, we need first to know the fundamental causes underlying it. Stated briefly these are:

a. **The Growth of Nationalism.** Ever since the time when Kang Yu Wei, Liang Chi Chao, Sun Yat Sen, and their followers started the fight for a "new China" early in the nineties, a spirit of nationalism has been growing steadily among the Chinese people. This growth was greatly stimulated by the establishment of the Republic of China in 1912. The significance of this growth lies in the fact that, gradually but surely, the Chinese people are coming into conscious nationhood. Amid all the chaos and suffering of the past fourteen years of the young Republic, this is the outstanding factor in the situation.

The coming of this spirit of nationalism has already created among our people certain noticeable tendencies. It has called forth an increasing interest and participation in national affairs on the part of our people. It has raised the conception of "China for the Chinese." It is causing our people to question the much-vaunted superiority of Western civilization, especially since the war, with the consequent loss of Western prestige, fancied or real, in the Eastern world. It is stimulating a healthy desire to resist the wholesale Westernization of Chinese life and to preserve intact the national and racial heritage of the Chinese people.

The practical embodiment of these tendencies can be seen in the recent movements which have risen in our country. The space at my disposal will allow me to indicate only a few of these without much explanation.

1. The Patriotic Student Movement was an attempt on the part of students in 1918 to unite our people in common action to direct our Government to fight against foreign domination. Successful in its immediate objective of forcing the Government not to sign the Versailles treaty, the Movement has greatly helped our people to realize the tremendous power of a people when

organized nationally for common action. It is this realization which has led to the coming of so many so-called "Peoples' Organizations" which have demonstrated their power and usefulness on more than one occasion, notably at Washington, in the Disarmament Conference, and more recently, at Geneva, in the Opium Conferences.

2. The Revivalist Movements in the older religions of China, especially in Buddhism and Confucianism, are attempts to preserve and restate the religious values in Chinese culture and life. These movements will become increasingly powerful barriers to the spread of Christianity in China.

3. The Chinese Renaissance Movement is an attempt to preserve and evaluate the intellectual heritage of China. The influence of this movement at present is paramount among the young men of China and once more the strategy of intellectual leadership in China is demonstrated beyond dispute. For to-day it is the leaders of this Renaissance movement and not our political and military men who are making China.

4. Since the Revolution in Russia, several movements of a communistic character have risen among our people. The Young China group aims to develop a national and racial consciousness in our people as an antidote against the insidious attacks of Western nations. The anti-religion group desires to free men's minds from the oppression of religion, especially from Christianity. The anti-imperialism group is determined to fight for the abolishment of "un-equal treaties" forced upon China by the Western nations and to stand for the union of all exploited races against the forces of imperialism and capitalism.

b. The Growth of National Education. All the movements described in the last few paragraphs would hardly have been possible except for the steady growth of our national system of education. When first inaugurated in 1905 the system was naturally one compounded largely of ideals borrowed from the educational systems of other countries. But during the past ten years great strides have been made in the educational system, especially in the development of a sense of ownership and direction on the part of our educators. In other words, Chinese educators of to-day know what they want to achieve in our national education and so look with jealous eyes upon any influence which would

tend to thwart them in their purpose. All these educators believe thoroughly that education is the only salvation for China and the overwhelming majority among them believe that this education means pure education as distinct from religion.

c. **The Growth of the Christian Religion in China.** The past twenty-five years have seen the rapid growth of the influence of the Christian religion in China. This is especially noticeable in the sphere of higher education. Christians have become a factor to be reckoned with and the former attitude of frigid indifference toward them is no longer effective. The work of the City and Student Young Men's Christian Associations of China has specially brought the activity of Christians prominently before the public eye.

The Rise of the Anti-Christian Movement

From such a background emerged the Anti-Christian Movement. When the eleventh Conference of the World's Student Christian Federation was being held in Peking in 1922, a student Anti-Religion Movement was started at the same time as a protest against the activity of Christian students. This movement was led by a number of the intellectual leaders of China. It spread rapidly in all the educational centres of China. It was very active for a few months, publishing many pamphlets and declarations attacking organized religion as a bundle of superstitions and an exponent of the philosophy of imperialism and capitalism.

This first expression of the Anti-Religion Movement quieted down in less than a year. In the meantime, Russia appeared on the scene playing the rôle of a righteous nation, denouncing the imperialistic West and herself renouncing the Boxer Indemnity and other rights and privileges which the Tsarist Government had wrested from China. The effect of this on the mind and heart of the youth of the country is electric. It has helped in the past two years to fan into active life the feeling of resentment against the injustices which China has been forced to put up with in the past and the longing to see these injustices wiped out. This resulted in the organization of the Anti-Imperialistic Federation in the summer of 1924. About the same time, the Anti-Christian Movement was revived at Shanghai. A student was expelled from Shanghai College for disciplinary reasons. He entered a

private institution, gathered round himself a group of fellow-students who are anti-Christian in sentiment, and revived the Anti-Christian Federation of 1922. The revived Federation publishes a weekly paper called *The Awakened*, which I understand is having a wide circulation in the student centres of China.

The Purpose of the Anti-Christian Movement

The avowed purpose of the Anti-Christian Federation is actively and aggressively to oppose Christianity. Its weapons are the scientific attitude of mind and the national and racial consciousness of the people. The arguments used by the Federation are quite similar to those used by the same movement in 1922. Against religion in general, the following points are advanced:

1. Religion is glorified superstition.
2. Religion enslaves the human mind.
3. Religion is the opponent of human progress.
4. Religion is a prolific breeder of that worst form of strife, the religious wars of history.
5. Religion, instead of uniting, tends to destroy the unity of the human race.
6. Religion gives a false basis to life by encouraging a belief in super-natural beings instead of reliance upon our own powers for self-realization.

Against organized Christianity, the following are most often urged as reasons for opposition:

1. Christianity is only one of many religions and not necessarily the best and highest.
2. Christianity is the ally of imperialism and capitalism.
3. Christianity panders to the rich and the influential.
4. Christianity is dogmatic and unscientific.
5. Christianity meddles with politics and lawsuits.
6. Christianity has been the cause of several "unjust treaties" imposed upon China.
7. Christianity is made up of interminable sects.
8. Christianity is one of the agents of Westernization.
9. Christianity is an opiate used by the Western powers to drug Eastern peoples into submission by its doctrine of peace and love.
10. Christianity denationalizes its converts.

Most of these arguments were used by the Anti-Religion Movement in 1922. Perhaps the only new factors in the situation are, first, the coming of Bolshevik influence and second, a definite endeavour to identify Christianity with the policy of cultural exploitation of China by dominating the education of Chinese youth through mission institutions of learning.

The Organization of the Movement

The present Anti-Christian Movement has its central headquarters in Shanghai. It has spread to Peking, Nanking, Wuchang, Changsha, Foochow, and other important cities of China. Perhaps Changsha and Canton are the two centres most violently affected by this Movement. The Federation maintains two departments of activity, namely, a department for the investigation of Christianity and all its related activities and a department of publicity, with lectures and pamphlets setting forth the evils of Christianity. As mentioned before, the official organ of the Federation is the weekly, *The Awakened*. A recent analysis of the first twelve issues of this weekly made by Mr. T. L. Shen, one of the national student secretaries of the Young Men's Christian Association in China, yields the following interesting itemization: articles attacking—mission schools, 13, Christianity in general, 12, Christians, 8, the Church, 2, Christian literature, 2, preachers, 1, the Bible, 1, Jesus Christ, 1. This analysis bears out the observation of many people that in the East to-day there is a respect for the person and life of Christ which does not extend to the organized Church.

Some Thoughts Suggested by the Anti-Christian Movement

The Anti-Christian Movement is not an isolated movement born out of the stubborn spirit of the stiff-necked heathen. It is part and parcel of the whole question of the relation between East and West—political, intellectual, economic, and racial. To regard it in any other light is to misunderstand the whole situation. The West has piled up a heavy load of injustice and exploitation in the East. The peoples of the East are now re-acting against it in what is to them a movement towards self-preservation. Will the West pause, take note, and—Dare we express it?—perhaps mend some of its ways?

The thoughts which this movement stirs up in the mind of a follower of Christ are even more distressing. Everywhere so-called Christians are busily engaged in offering not themselves but others to God. Our Churches with their divisions and quarrels are a travesty upon God and His all-embracing love. Instead of living the Christian life, many of our leaders and Christian workers are trying to sell religion in the best approved methods of modern "salesmanship." We have so institutionalized the life of the spirit as almost to have killed it for many people. Can we wonder then that people should despise and hate us? It must have torn the heart of Jesus again to see the reproach we have brought upon His Name. May this Anti-Christian Movement serve to jar us loose from the comfort of our smug respectability, from the shame of feeble virtue, from the deceit of hypocrisy, from the shrivelling influence of pettiness, and cause us to move out into the wide open spaces, daring to think the thoughts of God and live out the implications of the godly life in all its ramifications in this modern world.

A Visit to the Philippine Islands

By CHARLES D. HURREY

MY third visit to the Philippine Islands extended over a period of twelve days, March 10-22, 1924. During this time three journeys were made away from Manila. The first was to the country home of General Aguinaldo—ex-President of the Philippine Republic, at Cavite, about fifteen miles from Manila. The General has a son now studying in West Point Military Academy, U. S. A., and a daughter who has studied in Wellesley College; he is, therefore, in touch with student thought and ideals and expressed a lively interest in the aims and methods of the W. S. C. F. It was a pleasure to present him a copy of Dr. Mott's report of twenty-five years' work of the Federation. Another side-trip took me 160 miles north of Manila and five thousand feet up into the pine-covered mountains to Baguio. This is the location of the annual student conference, and it would be difficult to discover a more inspiring spot,—the air is cool and bracing and the outlook over hills and out to sea is such as to lift the horizon of all who

assemble there. The eighth annual student conference at Christmas time brought to Baguio nearly two hundred students and leaders and was a powerful factor in deepening and extending the influence of the Student Christian Movement in the Philippines. The third journey away from Manila took me to Los Baños, forty miles south-east; here is situated the College of Agriculture, Forestry, and Engineering; a beautiful building has been completed for the Young Men's Christian Association, which is a busy centre of social and religious interest among the six hundred students.

Extent of Territory and General Conditions

For those who may not have made a recent study of the Philippine Islands it should be explained that there are 7,083 separate islands in the group with a total population of about eleven millions; there are 48 different provinces and the distance from the most northern to the farthest south is 1,152 miles. Of the total population only 8.2 per cent. are non-Christian, and these are mostly Mohammedans.

Commendable progress is being made in education; the percentage of illiteracy is now about fifty. Rigid measures have been taken to safeguard public health; epidemics are now unknown and the general health conditions have been greatly improved. Likewise there are many signs of improvement in the economic conditions; there is a steady development of local industries and a notable growth in foreign commerce.

Advancement is being made toward self-government but not with sufficient rapidity to please the Filipinos; all the legislative positions are held by Filipinos—and in the Executive positions there are 9,208 Filipinos and 535 Americans—9 judicial positions are held by Americans and 1,158 by Filipinos.

The Independence Movement

A vigorous nation-wide campaign for immediate and absolute independence is being waged; a permanent independence commission has been organized, employing representatives in Washington as well as at home, issuing quantities of literature, conducting speakers' bureaux, stimulating the newspapers, raising funds by tag-day parades, and employing other publicity methods. As yet, very little bitterness has been exhibited by the campaigners and

no violence, but it is not easy for any American to speak or write effectively (for Filipino followers) unless he is a champion of their political aspirations. The principal arguments presented for independence are as follows:

The solemn promise of the U. S. A. to grant independence when stable government should be established in the Islands should now be fulfilled because such stable government does exist; the Filipino people are practically unanimous in their desire for independence; it is essential that the bonds of friendship between the Filipino and American peoples should be maintained and strengthened, but such will not be the case if the granting of independence is longer postponed. The legitimate interests of the United States will be safeguarded by an independent Philippine government.

Progress of S. C. M. since Peking Conference

The twelve Filipino delegates returning from Peking gave wide publicity to the action of the Conference in admitting the Filipino Movement as a corresponding member of the Federation. This was welcome news to their fellow students and professors and was a powerful stimulus to the furtherance of the Movement; the Peking group has held frequent meetings for fellowship and prayer and has spread abroad a new understanding of the Federation aims and possibilities. In addition to the appointment of a National Committee of the Young Men's Christian Association for student work there have been effected two more student Associations; therefore, at present we find the Central Student Branch in Manila with extensive buildings providing hostel, restaurant, social room, reading room, and other facilities, with a total membership of nearly two thousand; the University of the Philippines Branch with 250 members, and an unusually strong force of officers and committee men; and the Los Baños Association of the College of Agriculture, Forestry, and Engineering, having three hundred members and an able full-time general secretary; this Association occupies an adequate building which serves as a hostel and social and religious centre for the student body of six hundred. A Student Association has also been launched in Central Philippine College—Ilo Ilo—through the initiative of a former secretary of Filipino student work in America. Steps toward organization have been taken in five other student centres.

An extensive programme of social and religious study and service is being carried out—culminating in the annual student conference. A specialist in Boys' work has recently been added to the staff of the Young Men's Christian Association and his efforts are opening many new avenues of service for students among high-school and other boys in Manila.

It is gratifying to see the influence of members trained in student work as they graduate and take active part in the Church and Association activities; particularly noteworthy is the new movement toward a United Christian Church; 150 educated Christian leaders, mostly returned students, have already identified themselves with this movement, which has the cordial backing of three communions doing missionary work in the islands. This initiative is attracting considerable attention and bids fair to be an effective venture in the field of Christian unity, inasmuch as many who are joining are liberal Roman Catholics or not affiliated with any Church. In this, as in most other progressive undertakings, the returned students from America are a potent factor.

Membership in the Federation*

The Filipino student leaders believe they have fulfilled the constitutional requirements for complete affiliation with the Federation and they are presenting an earnest appeal for such action by the General Committee of the Federation in its High Leigh meeting. They contend that the voice and vote of smaller National Movements is needed in the councils of the Federation, lest they be dominated by the more powerful Movements. The stability and permanence of the Student Christian Movement in the Philippines are guaranteed by the moral and financial backing of the Young Women's Christian Association and the Young Men's Christian Association, which enjoy a prestige and confidence in the Islands that is extraordinary,—but quite apart from such backing, there is sufficient enthusiasm and ability among students and professors to enable them to carry on. Moreover, it is urged that admission to the Federation will assist the Philippine Movement in combating a chauvinistic spirit now being manifested as a bi-

*Readers will recall that the Student Movement of the Philippines was admitted to full membership in the Federation at the High Leigh General Committee meeting in August, 1924.

product of the National uprising. The students desire to perform their part in the international fellowship—not as wards of any other power but standing alone and expressing their personality.

Noteworthy Tendencies of Student Thought and Activity

Nationalistic aspirations permeate all organizations, meetings, and utterances; the Press, platform, pulpit, cinema, billboards, even the hotel lobbies—all echo the national cry for independence.

The students are opposed to denominational cleavages; many of them refuse to be identified with any branch of the Church; they pity the ministers and welcome such interdenominational enterprises as the Young Men's Christian Association.

There is a growing sympathy for labour classes and organizations. It is not difficult to enlist volunteers for service to the under-privileged classes of society. Students are crowding the professions of law, journalism, politics, and business; they are not preparing as they ought for the ministry, teaching, and social welfare. Relatively few are willing to spend their lives in service in the rural and village communities but many are flocking to the white lights of the cities.

Recommendations

1. That Federation communications requiring student discussion and action reach Manila before the Annual Conference at Christmas time.

2. That a Federation Secretary other than American visit the Philippines to co-operate in a movement for obtaining recruits for the Christian ministry and in organizing and conducting international forums.

3. That the Federation exercise extreme care to ensure attendance of Filipino representation at all regular conferences and General Committee meetings, and that Filipinos be urged to write for publication in Federation and other student magazines articles regarding their life and thought.

4. That the General Committee at its High Leigh meeting admit to full membership the Student Department of the Young Men's Christian Association of the Philippine Islands.

Latvia and Esthonia

By MARGARET WRONG

THE republics of Latvia and Esthonia, like other new states of Europe, are faced with national problems which have a direct bearing on the development and work of Student Christian Movements in these countries. First among these is the question of national unity. In Latvia and Esthonia are German and Russian minorities, eager to preserve their identity in the face of Lettish and Esthonian majorities. Many of the members of minority groups are a prey to bitterness and despair; for them the change of government has brought in its train loss of status, of possessions, of opportunity. Lettish and Esthonian majorities, on the other hand, are full of hope because long-cherished aspirations have been realized; their optimism is tempered, however, by the sensitiveness and bitter memories of peoples new to the task of government, who have gained their goal after a long struggle. These racial groups lead a separate social life. In Latvia, for instance, the Young Women's Christian Association, founded by Americans, is known as the international society, for it is the only one in the country which has a governing committee of Letts, Germans, and Russians. Children of the different races go, for the most part, to separate schools, and in the universities of both countries students of different races have little intercourse with each other. The Jewish question is also acute in the towns; particularly in Riga, Jews are numerous and there is a growing feeling against them.

Problems of Rehabilitation

Both states are faced with the necessity of repairing the ravages of war and revolution and of establishing good social standards. Between 1914 and 1920 five armies occupied Latvia, the advanced German line ran through the country, and Riga underwent a German and Bolshevik occupation and suffered bombardment. Progress has been made in restoring normal conditions of life and in promoting certain social reforms. But during my last visit I talked with a good many people who have a profound

concern for the social life of both countries. For example, they see a danger of false standards of luxury being adopted by country people through the influence of the towns. Several professors talked with me of the importance of encouraging in Lettish and Esthonian students, the majority of whom come from the country, a respect for their peasant ancestry and for the simple, hardy standards of peasant life. The link between town and country is close; at the beginning of term old peasants are seen driving their children many versts over the country roads to the university town of Tartu in Esthonia. These young peasants are plunged into a life filled with new interests and amusements, a life far less solitary than that of the country. As a result standards may become confused and the town may be regarded as the Mecca of desire, a serious situation in agricultural countries.

Educational Development

An adequate system of education for all is the goal of both states. Schools have sprung up everywhere. In many places it has been necessary to have two sessions a day in order to accommodate the pupils. From the schools students flock into the universities. The University of Riga in Latvia is five years old, and has nearly six thousand students. The University of Tartu in Esthonia has from four thousand to five thousand students. These figures are high in countries with populations of less than two millions. In each university professors say that there will not be enough professional openings in the country for all the students. Students hope to find professional work in Russia, but at present there is little likelihood of this. There is, however, much to be done in the homeland by intellectuals if they are willing to do manual work and not merely direct. Architects, for instance, must be willing to build houses with their own hands, and students of agriculture must do practical farming. A well-known professor in Riga in a public meeting arranged by a student organization urged that it is the duty of all students to work with other sections of the population. Education must promote understanding and encourage unity. For some intellectuals this will mean a return to the obscure and lonely life of the country, and the forfeiture of what is commonly considered a career.

The Rôle of the Church

The part the Church might play in building a sound national life cannot be over-estimated. Both Latvia and Esthonia are predominantly Lutheran by tradition, with Orthodox and Roman Catholic minorities. There are not lacking devoted pastors who have faced war and revolution with their flocks and who are giving their lives to an arduous ministry, in parishes covering a wide area. One such man I met in Riga, the pastor of a large parish in a provincial town; he preached three or four times a week; he was also director of a school and lectured on theology in Riga, which involved his spending two nights a week in the train. When I asked him why he worked so hard, he said that there were parishes without pastors, and the work must be done. In spite of the labour of such devoted individuals, the Church has small hold on many of the people; this is true of students. The number of students in the theological faculties is small, and students are not lacking who see in the Church the casket of outworn dogma, instead of the fount of spiritual life. Yet many of the rising generation long for a personal faith and for a life rooted in spiritual verities. They will listen to those who in word and life can point the way. Such leaders are greatly needed.

Fear of Aggression

Another problem which has to be considered in facing the field of work of the national Student Christian Movement and of the Federation is the fear of aggressive movements against these new republics. This fear is mainly directed towards Russia. It is strong in Latvia, but is even greater in Esthonia, where it has recently been deepened by a communist rising in the capital, Reval, in which lives were lost, and an attempt was made to assassinate ministers of the Government. A Lettish professor, in speaking of disarmament, said that for states bordering on Russia, disarmament without guaranties is impossible. He added that people long for peace and security but do not know how to get it, while Russia stands outside agreements between nations, and while her government espouses a theory of society incompatible with the theory espoused by other states. Fear of aggression and of revolution breeds suspicion in international relations.

The Latvian and Esthonian Student Christian Movements

It is evident that the Student Christian Movements in Latvia and Esthonia face a difficult situation, but by the same token they face great possibilities. There are students who will respond to a call to sacrifice for a cause. In Latvia eighty per cent. earn their own living while pursuing their studies in the University, and among these there are not lacking those who face hardship in order to fit themselves for the service of their people and their nation. Again and again one hears, "Our generation has the task of laying sound foundations; who will do it if we fail?" Added to a willingness for sacrifice, there is a sense of personal need. The way is open for the work of the Movement. From the universities should go out into the community men and women who will give themselves unreservedly, and who have a conviction based on experience of the unity possible in Christ.

In Latvia and Esthonia there are small Student Christian Movements confronted with these difficulties and opportunities. In Esthonia an Esthonian Association was founded after the war, following on a visit from some members of the Student Christian Movement of Finland. The Movement has had a room first in the building of the Young Women's Christian Association and then in the building of the Young Men's Christian Association. It has groups for Bible Study and meetings on religious questions. Some of its members have undertaken some social work. It holds a summer conference each year. There is also a small German group, a small Russian group, and student groups in the Young Women's Christian Association and the Young Men's Christian Association. The former has started hand-work for women students; embroidery and sewing is given out to them; some beautiful Esthonian designs have been adapted, and a certain number of women students are enabled to support themselves by this work. About a year ago a central committee was formed, on which sit representatives of all these groups, and some joint activities are now undertaken. During my visit to Esthonia last November, the Day of Prayer was made the occasion for a joint meeting of the different groups. It was the first time that Esthonians, Russians, and Germans had had a common meeting of this kind. There was a service in three languages, a professor spoke

in Esthonian, and I spoke on the Federation in English and was translated into German. Between thirty and forty students were present. This may seem a small thing, but it is a beginning, and marks a conviction about the possibility of a new unity.

In Latvia a small Lettish movement was founded nearly four years ago. There are also some students in the Young Women's Christian Association and in the Young Men's Christian Association. The Student Christian Association has an apartment in which four students live and in which they have a room where they hold their meetings. The room seats about twenty-five comfortably, and forty uncomfortably. Activities at the present time are a weekly meeting, at which a member of the group, a professor or a pastor, reads a paper. The subjects are various. The attendance at this meeting varies from fifteen to forty people. A Bible class has also been started by ten or twelve of the older members of the group. The discussions showed plainly that there were students in the group who wished to find strength by which to live. One of them said: "I come here each Monday, hoping to get something which will help." This same feeling was expressed at a meeting of members at which I spoke on the strength of a Student Movement.

In both countries material conditions make the work of the Movement difficult. Health conditions are not good. Overwork and under-nourishment have made many susceptible to tuberculosis. One student told me that in two years eight of her student acquaintances had died of the disease. Many who have incipient tuberculosis are too poor to take the necessary rest and treatment.

In both countries the Movement has to create a spirit in which people can work together. Even within the groups this is a difficulty. Racial differences, different points of view and modes of thought, and the great material pressure of life are stumbling blocks. Yet within these groups, in gatherings and conferences, there has been some experience of a new life. The following account of a small conference, written by the president of the Latvian Christian Association, is significant of this:

"A small autumn conference took place on the coast at Riga. It was a little retreat, where about twenty-five men and women students met together at the beginning of the

winter's work for a few hours of quiet and peace. We wished to look into our own hearts, and in quietness gain strength for the great task of our lives. We were there only for two short autumn days, but we spent some memorable moments together. Out there by the sea, far away from the town and its bustle and noise, we enjoyed the last autumn sunshine and the beauty of the autumn scenery. It was as if nature herself wished to join with us in spirit. The deep hush over everything filled our hearts with a profound solemnity. The evening service in the little chapel in the wood, lit by torches, was like a Christmas Eve celebration. We returned home by the sea-shore, and as we walked along in the moonlight, with burning torches in our hands, we looked like wandering lights.

"In those moments we listened to the still voice of nature, stiller than our very breath, the sea itself uttering no sound, so that only the faintest whisper reached our ears. And this silence spoke to us; and when we have heard the deep voice of silence, then we know something of Eternity, and have received something of it into our hearts. That, I believe, was what filled our souls with new strength."

How Other Movements Can Help

There are ways in which other Movements can help the groups in Latvia and Esthonia. They can break down the feeling of isolation which exists. A Lettish student whom I had met on a previous visit accosted me last November with "What, you have actually returned to this forgotten corner of the world!" A professor wrote to me of the value of a visit from a Federation secretary as a link with Western thought and civilization. Delegates from neighbouring Movements to national conferences, and invitations to send delegates from Latvia and Esthonia to conferences abroad, arrangements for some travelling scholarships for students of these countries, correspondence with members of the Movements, the sending of literature published by other Movements—these are some of the means which might be used to overcome this sense of isolation.

There are a limited number of posts for foreigners who can teach English in the English Institute attached to the University of Riga and there may possibly be some openings in the University of Tartu. If people can be found for such posts who add to academic qualifications an understanding spirit and experience of

work in another Student Movement, their share in the life and work of these groups would be of lasting value.

The study of the situation these new Movements face, the knowledge of their difficulties and opportunities, confronts us inevitably with the question of how members in the Federation can strengthen one another in the common task of working for the Kingdom of God.

A Trip Through the Balkans

By CONRAD HOFFMANN, JR.

"He who travels much can relate many things," is a German proverb particularly applicable to Federation secretaries, who, of necessity, must spend a great part of their time in travelling.

As one of the part-time secretaries of the Federation it was the writer's privilege recently to travel through the countries of the Balkan Peninsula. The tour was undertaken by the writer in the dual capacity of secretary of the World's Student Christian Federation and of European Student Relief secretary. It is perhaps important to note that no perceptible handicap or difficulty resulted from this dual relationship. On the contrary, access to various student, university, and Government circles was possible which perhaps would not have been so easily accessible had the writer gone either as a Federation secretary only, or as a Relief secretary.

Meetings, Addresses, and Interviews

The customary meetings, conferences, and interviews were had such as no doubt every secretary has on similar trips. Unfortunately, in several centres serious disturbances in university routine made normal meetings with students impossible. Thus at Zagreb all student gatherings were prohibited, and the Student Union Headquarters placed under lock and key because of a public demonstration, organized by the students as a protest against the expulsion from the University of two of the popular and more liberal professors by order of the Minister of Education. In Belgrade the same Minister of Education had without previous warning advanced the final examinations three weeks, thus bring-

ing them in the week preceding the Government elections. By this order the students were pre-occupied in preparation for the examinations, and prevented from the usual participation in political agitation for the elections.

In Bucharest an all-university strike by students was in operation, with Government troops stationed in front of all University buildings. Under the circumstances, student meetings were out of the question, because such would have served as occasions for demonstrations by the striking students.

These three instances are indicative, on the one hand, of the instability of the student world in the Balkans, and, on the other hand, of the relatively important position, politically and otherwise, which the local student bodies occupy.

Constantinople presented another difficulty due to an epidemic of influenza, with resultant closing of all educational institutions, so that meetings with students were impossible.

In spite of all difficulties, however, numerous conferences and meetings were arranged. These were either of a general nature for all students, or of a special character, and intended primarily for members of the various Student Christian Movements or groups. A most notable series of meetings were those held in Athens.

The following are the topics on which the writer was asked to speak in the course of this trip: Problems of Modern Students, Problems of Student Christian Movements, Finances and Student Self-help Methods, The Significance of the World's Student Christian Federation in the Student World, The Secret of Success for the Individual Life and for Student Christian Movements, The Value of Social Service Activities for the Spiritual Life of a Student Christian Movement, Personal Religious Experience, How God Deals with Man, Bible Study and Methods, and European Student Relief, its History and Activities to Date.

General meetings were held in Athens, Sofia, Budapest, Prague, and Munich; special meetings for Christian students in Athens, Sofia, Budapest, Prague, and Constantinople. General and special meetings for Russian refugee students were arranged in Ljubljana, Zagreb, Belgrade, Sofia, and Prague. A special meeting for Greek and Armenian refugee students took place in Athens.

Interviews with leading Government, Church, and business

authorities as well as with professors and students were many and of considerable significance and importance. Among the individuals thus seen were the following: His Holiness, the Patriarch of Constantinople, His Holiness, the Metropolitan of Salonica, His Holiness, the Metropolitan of Athens, various Ministers of Finance, of Education, of the Interior, the Rectors of the Universities in Athens, Constantinople, Sofia, Budapest, Vienna, and Munich, Mr. Stinnes, son of the late Hugo Stinnes, Mr. Duisberg, a leading industrialist of Germany, and Mr. von Knilling, Prime Minister of Bavaria.

Accessibility to such influential personalities is the fortunate lot of Federation secretaries, and is indicative of the important position held by the World's Student Christian Federation.

Recommendations

1. The Federation must be prepared to study and meet the increasing influence of Communism in the Balkans. In Athens, for instance, the Student Christian Movement has found it necessary to organize with the aid of professors a coaching course on Communism. In Sofia thirty to fifty per cent. of the students are supposed to be Communistic in sympathy and thought. The recent catastrophe in one of the Cathedrals, which cost so many lives, is indicative of the extensive permeation of Bulgaria with Communist propaganda and agitation.

2. The Federation needs to fight or counteract with courageous daring the growing war spirit already so dominant in the Balkans. The military is omnipresent; frontiers bristle with bayonets. Army budgets continue to absorb the bulk of the financial resources of the countries concerned. Land remains undeveloped, the countries are impoverished, and the people ignorant if not illiterate. It is in these lands where war has reigned so long that one sees what a curse it is. Unless the Federation and all other forces opposed to war carry on an aggressive campaign for reconstruction, international understanding, and co-operation, we shall be heading for another war. The importance of conferences in the Balkan States cannot be underestimated. It is sincerely hoped that the European Student Relief will be able to hold its conference in 1926 somewhere in the Balkans; indeed Yugoslavia has already offered to serve as host.

3. The Federation needs to study the question of Church relationships, particularly with reference to the Orthodox Church. The open-mindedness and friendly attitude of the Church leaders in Greece and in the Orthodox Church, coupled with the contacts with Western Christianity which are to-day possible, present opportunities of infinite potentiality if wisely followed up. This new relationship with the Eastern Churches seems to offer possibilities as great as those presented by Japan when it first came in contact with the West. One needs to devote much time and prayer to the consideration of how the Federation can develop real fellowship and co-operation with these Churches, so that all may mutually profit by the contributions which each can make. The student field is strategic in this respect.

4. Careful consideration should be given to Bible study promotion and methods. This is especially important from the standpoint of the Eastern Churches which to-day, for the first time, are really in favour of, if not encouraging, the study of the Bible. What has the Federation to offer the student groups in this field? Some, at least, of the existing courses of Bible study should be immediately adapted for use by members of the Eastern Churches.

5. A prevalent difficulty with which the Federation must everywhere cope is a feeling of too great weakness on the part of the local groups to do aggressive religious work among their fellow students, and the conception that religious questions are the personal affair of the individual, not to be intruded upon by an outsider. The Federation must be prepared to overcome this hesitancy by concrete and definite encouragement. Adaptation of some of the books on personal work for use among students in the Balkans seems desirable. It is one's willingness to be used of God, not one's weakness or inexperience, that is the determining factor in effective religious work.

6. The Federation must regard Yugoslavia as a pioneer field, and should send some one to spend at least two months to help in the organization of a movement or active group. A man would be preferable. Zagreb and Belgrade must be dealt with separately, in the hope of ultimate union and co-operation of the respective groups. It will be a long time before a native Yugoslavian can serve as student secretary for both centres. In any effort at organization, the experience and co-operation of the Young Men's

Christian Association in Belgrade should be solicited and secured.

7. Greater and more active exchange between our Movements should be encouraged. Could not the Federation arrange to put these new Movements in the Balkans in touch with the older and more effective Movements? For example, the corresponding chairmen of different countries might be put in touch with one another, the President of the Athens Student Christian Association in touch with the President of a Student Christian Union in England or Holland or of a Student Christian Association in America, the religious work committee chairman of the Sofia group with the corresponding chairman of a group in Germany, and so on. Definite recommendations of such correspondence exchanges should emanate from the Federation. They would serve to strengthen solidarity and fellowship within the Federation.

8. The Federation needs to co-operate actively and constructively with the Young Men's Christian Association and the Young Women's Christian Association forces at work in these countries. Each needs the other. The Associations need the students for boys' work and high-school boys' work; the Federation needs the Associations for opportunities of service for its student members. And surely the Associations must build up their future native leadership from the ranks of the Student Christian Movement members. Certainly in a number of countries the writer could have done very little without the generous help given by the Young Men's Christian Association forces.

9. In Roumania the Student Christian Movement, whereas organically quite independent of the Young Men's Christian Association, has its headquarters in the Y. M. C. A. building. The American general secretary of the Y. M. C. A. is vitally interested in student work, and is giving considerable time to the Student Christian Movement. He does this voluntarily and in an unofficial capacity. To give concreteness to this relationship seems imperative for efficiency. The writer recommends that the Student Christian Movement, if agreeable, make a definite request of the Young Men's Christian Association, that the latter allow its secretary to serve officially as advisory student secretary to the Student Christian Movement, until such time as finances permit the appointment of a native trained student secretary.

10. The Federation needs to think through its position with

reference to the Jewish question. Anti-Semitism is a bitter issue in the Balkans. The writer is convinced that present attempts at solution are wrong, or at least only partially solve the problem from the standpoint of the Gentile. Has the Federation anything to suggest by way of a more equitable adjustment, for the Federation representatives are being asked repeatedly for practical suggestions which will give more hope of actual solution rather than the present temporary postponement of the issue, which only leaves it a festering sore.

11. As most urgent of all, the writer regards the opportunity presented by the compelling search for absolute values so characteristic of and widespread in the thought-life of students. In spite of discouragingly extensive materialism and scepticism, and intense national and racial feeling, a growing consciousness of the need of some Absolute, some Truth, which will give "content, direction, and value" to otherwise inexplicable life, is evident.

In this search and hunger for something which is to take the place of the old and discarded values of life, the Federation has both a glorious opportunity and a fearful responsibility. Here the Federation dare not fail even if it fail in all other respects.

Observations Regarding European Student Relief

As secretary of European Student Relief, the writer would now like to report some important conclusions based on observations made during the trip to the Balkans. These may be discussed first from the standpoint of the Russian and other refugee students in these countries, and secondly, from that of the native students.

1. Russian Refugee Students

a. Of primary importance is the necessity of finding employment for the increasing number of refugee students now beginning to complete their studies. The total number of Russian refugee students who finish their studies in 1925 is estimated at six hundred. Obviously both Czecho-Slovakia and Jugoslavia when they undertook support of the Russian refugee students expected that before they completed their studies conditions would be such as to permit the return of the students to Russia, for normal life and employment. Unfortunately, as is only too well known, these ex-

pectations have not materialized, so that there is now no place for the graduating students. Overproduction of intellectuals and restriction of potential fields of employment since the war have further combined to make the lot of the graduating Russian refugee student a desperate one.

b. The need of advanced university text-books is acute. European Student Relief has provided a number of libraries with books required by the students in the early years of their course. Now as these students are advancing into the upper classes they require advanced books which they themselves are unable to secure. It is recommended that the European Student Relief appropriate some funds for the purchase of the most necessary books and install them in the existing European Student Relief libraries.

c. Second-hand clothing is still needed, notably in Sofia and Belgrade; many of the Russian students are still wearing parts of army uniforms of four and five years ago.

d. Assistance by means of loans is recommended for the very remarkable student self-help co-operatives which have been organized by some of the Russian groups, notably in Ljubljana, Zagreb, and Prague.

e. Limited assistance in the provision of heat, light, and bedding seems necessary in a few centres, but such help should be restricted to a very minimum.

f. Aside from special scholarship loans to a few unusually meritorious students among the refugees, the writer would urge against any further direct pecuniary relief. In this connection the possibility of scholarships for promising Christian leaders should be seriously considered.

2. Native Students

Great opportunities for service not involving direct expenditure of funds exist everywhere.

a. In practically all centres visited deplorable housing conditions for students exist. The various authorities, government and educational, backed up by professors and students, are discussing ways and means for finding the necessary funds to erect student dormitories and hostels, in order to cope with the housing need. The writer was approached everywhere on the subject of the

possibility of loans, through the intermediation of European Student Relief, for building projects under consideration. Direct aid in the form of free grants of land, building material, etc., was promised by the Governments or local authorities in Budapest, Vienna, Graz, Sofia, and Belgrade. Practically all Governments or municipalities concerned agreed to furnish the necessary guaranties and securities.

It is a question whether European Student Relief should not attempt to negotiate an international loan for these hostel projects. By doing so it will secure to itself the right to a part in determining the policy of administration of the student dormitories sure to become a reality sooner or later in these centres, whereas if European Student Relief does not thus help, this opportunity will be lost.

b. In Athens, Constantinople, Belgrade, Sofia, and Bucharest great interest in student self-help was manifested. In Bucharest definite progress was made in the organization of a national student self-help committee. The Minister of Education, the Minister of the Interior, the president of one of the leading banks, a most influential newspaper editor, and various other business representatives, together with professors and representative students, agreed to serve on the committee. The newspaper man had already collected four and one-half million lei (\$25,000) for student needs, and agreed to turn this sum over to the larger committee as well as to throw open the columns of his newspaper for an aggressive educational campaign on student self-help methods.

In Athens the refugee students were organized for definite self-help plans in connection with their kitchen, but further direct guidance will be necessary if success is to result.

The self-help enterprises in Hungary, Austria, and Germany are to-day well organized and practically on an independent basis.

At the annual student self-help conference of the German students in Munich, the Government representative announced an annual appropriation of 2,700,000 Gold Marks (approximately \$750,000) by the Government to the Self-help Committee. The presence of influential Government, industrial, agricultural, and educational leaders gave evidence of the high regard and respect which the National Student Self-help Committee in Germany enjoys.

In Vienna the Self-help Committee has made most encouraging progress, in spite of the serious economic situation in the country. With loans aggregating \$5000, they have organized an efficient stenographic bureau in Graz, a cloth sale, and a money exchange bank; the latter is unable to care for all the business coming to it from the students.

In the less-developed countries, E. S. R. can and should render further service by means of loans to provide initial capital or to supplement the capital for self-help activities and their expansion.

c. A leading German industrialist made a tentative offer to provide a scholarship in Germany for one American student for every German student who is granted a scholarship in America. An expansion of this plan to include other countries, coupled with wise choice of the scholarship candidates, can mean much for promotion of understanding, fellowship, and co-operation.

d. In conclusion the writer would express his conviction that there is no further need of direct pecuniary relief for individual native students. Some thought, however, should be given to the question of help for tuberculous students. This can possibly be best rendered through maintenance of several beds or wards for students in existing tuberculosis sanatoria.

Up and down the length and breadth of the Balkan Peninsula one was witness of a suffering but hopeful humanity, the victims of war madness bravely struggling to overcome the ravages of war,—dreaming and longing for peace, for home, for family, for work, all too few realizing that the road to such is the way of Christ. To have been instrumental in showing this way to some of the students in these lands was the cherished privilege of the writer, a privilege which he hopes will be many times repeated.



VADSTENA CASTLE, SWEDEN

The Birthplace of the World's Student Christian Federation, August 17-19, 1895.